

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9732

INFO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0692

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TGEN, XM, AR

SUBJECT: WORKING GROUP ON SCIENCE AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY:
MONTEVIDEO MEETING, FEB. 3-7, 1975

REF: A. STATE 16101; B. BUENOS AIRES 651 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY RAISED QUESTION OF ARGDEL WITH AMB. BECKMANN JAN. 23 AND URGED ARGENTINA TO SEND HIGH LEVEL TECHNICAL DELEGATION. BECKMANN INDICATED HE HAD APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS MATTER NEXT DAY WITH MIN. OF EDUCATION. HE ALSO WAS TO DISCUSS ARG. REPRESENTATION FOR OAS MEETING IN MEXICO. PRESENT MINISTER OF EDUCATION HAS TAKEN HARD LINE AGAINST FOREIGN TRAVEL TO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS IN SCIENCE FIELD FOR MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENT ORGANIZATIONS (WHICH INCLUDES CONICET). WHEN QUERIED ABOUT POSSIBLE REPRESENTATION FROM MORE TECHNOLOGY-ORIENTED SIDE OF GOA, SPECIFICALLY INTI, BECKMANN INDICATED GREAT RELUCTANCE AT INVOLVING THEM BECAUSE OF "COMMUNIST" LEANINGS OF CURRENT LEADERSHIP, WHICH WAS JUST BEGINNING TO BE CORRECTED. BECKMANN PROMISED TO INFORM US WHEN DEL WAS DECIDED.

2. FOLLOWING POSTPONEMENT OF MFM AND CONVERSATION REPORTED REFTEL B, WE AGAIN QUERIED BECKMANN ABOUT HIS UNDERSTANDING OF MONTEVIDEO MEETING AND OF ARGENTINE
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PARTICIPATION THEREIN, IF MEETING HELD. BECKMANN

STATED HIS "PERSONAL" CONVICTION THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO POSTPONE MONTEVIDEO MEETING. HE REASONED THAT PRESENT SITUATION IN WAKE OF SANTIAGO SG IV OUTCOME AND HIS UNDERSTANDING U.S. POSITION AND LATAM ATTITUDES LIKELY ONLY LEAD TO U.S.-LATAM CONFRONTATION AT PRESENT TIME. WITH TIME TO WORK THINGS OUT MORE CLOSELY, HE REASONED, THERE WOULD BE MORE HOPE FOR PROGRESS. BECKMANN SAID HE HAD NO RPT NO WORD RE URUGUAY'S ATTITUDE AS OF TIME OUR DISCUSSION (NOON JAN. 29).

3. COMMENT. EMBASSY HAS NO STRONG FEELINGS EITHER WAY RE SCHEDULE FOR MONTEVIDEO MEETING. WHILE WE HAVE NO RPT NO REASON TO DOUBT FIGUERERO'S OR BECKMANN'S SINCERITY, WE WOULD NOTE THAT POSTPONEMENT WOULD APPEAR TO SERVE ARGENTINE INTEREST, REGARDLESS OF ATTITUDES OF OTHER LATAM STATES, AS IT WOULD CONCEIVABLY PERMIT TIME FOR GOA TO AT LEAST TRY TO DEVELOP A COORDINATED ARGENTINE POSITION FOR THE MEETING. (MANY KEY FIGURES WERE ON VACATION DURING JANUARY. THERE IS STILL NO S&T SECRETARY IN THE EDUCATION MINISTRY. THE RECENT CHANGES AT THE TOP OF THE ECONOMY MINISTRY HAVE YET TO BE CONSOLIDATED AT LOWER LEVELS.) NONETHELESS, FROM WHAT WE KNOW OF PRESENT OVERALL SITUATION, AND PARTICULARLY SINCE ARGENTINA APPEARS UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO PLAY STRONG COMPROMISOR ROLE, WE SUSPECT THAT BECKMANN IS RIGHT THAT MONTEVIDEO MEETING, AT THIS TIME LIKELY BE CONFRONTATIONAL. LACK OF FIXED DATE FOR MFM ALSO CLEARLY WOULD REDUCE INCENTIVE TO COMPROMISE AND WORK OUT RATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOREIGN MINISTERS. ACCORDINGLY, ON BALANCE, EMBASSY VIEW WOULD BE THAT, IF GOU SO INCLINED, USG SHOULD SUPPORT POSTPONEMENT WG MEETING UNTIL SUCH TIME AS NEW DATE ESTABLISHED FOR MFM.
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